

Los Alamos to the Chinese which came to light this week. Regardless of when the leaks occurred, initial reports suggest to me that this Administration knew of the problem but soft-peddled it so as to avoid calling its China policy into question. A NSC spokesman recently refuted that allegation by saying that the Administration has kept the relevant committees of Congress closely informed of the problem over the last 18 months, and of what was being done to address it. Mr. President, I have been Chairman of the East Asia Subcommittee for more than four years now. No one from the Administration has ever mentioned it to me, or to my staff. Nor has anyone contacted the staff of the full Foreign Relations Committee, or Chairman HELMS' Asia advisors.

I believe it is time to take a step back—on both sides of the aisle—and give our China policy a very long, hard, critical look. Congress needs to take the lead in examining whether, in the Administration's eagerness to engage China, we have overlooked the fact that our return—an improvement in China's domestic or international behavior—has been negligible at best.

I am not advocating isolating China, or shutting off our contacts or dialog. I do not believe that we can bully or badger the Chinese into accepting our view of the world as the only one that is correct. Instead, I agree that we need to communicate with Beijing on a whole variety of fronts, to engage in open and frank dialog, and that because of its size, its economy, and its geopolitical importance we cannot, and should not, ignore them. But we need to take a look at the level at which that interaction takes place, and what we are willing to give up in exchange for that relationship. And we also need to look at what we want or expect in return.

Mr. President, our relationship with them should be grounded in reality, not in wishful thinking. And it should be a two-way street, not a one-way to a dead-end.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, today, March 15th, is the Ides of March for 1999. Like Caesar, Congress and the Administration are ignoring the one thing that has the potential to cripple our nation by crippling the booming U.S. economy—I am speaking of the Federal Debt.

While the political debate addresses the budget surplus, the balanced budget, and Social Security, it ignores the larger and lingering problem of the federal debt, and the lurking interest on the federal debt. Essentially, Mr. President, the forest cannot be seen for the trees.

Well, Mr. President, I am one who far prefers to examine to see the whole picture. If we continue to ignore the escalating debt and its enormous interest growing almost one billion dollars

daily—just to pay the interest, mind you—then we will continue to risk economic bedlam down the road.

With these thoughts in mind, Mr. President, I begin where I left off Friday:

At the close of business, Friday, March 12, 1999, the federal debt stood at 5,653,581,734,840.04 (Five trillion, six hundred fifty-three billion, five hundred eighty-one million, seven hundred thirty-four thousand, eight hundred forty dollars and four cents).

One year ago, March 12, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,529,750,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred twenty-nine billion, seven hundred fifty million).

Fifteen years ago, March 12, 1984, the federal debt stood at \$1,464,623,000,000 (One trillion, four hundred sixty-four billion, six hundred twenty-three million).

Twenty-five years ago, March 12, 1974, the federal debt stood at \$469,792,000,000 (Four hundred sixty-nine billion, seven hundred ninety-two million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,183,789,734,840.04 (Five trillion, one hundred eighty-three billion, seven hundred eighty-nine million, seven hundred thirty-four thousand, eight hundred forty dollars and four cents) during the past 25 years.

HATE CRIMES PREVENTION ACT OF 1999

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I again urge prompt consideration and passage of Hate Crimes Prevention Act." I co-sponsored this measure in the last Congress and do so again this year. This bill would amend the federal hate crimes statute to make it easier for federal law enforcement officials to investigate and prosecute cases of racial and religious violence. It would also focus the attention and resources of the federal government on the problem of hate crimes committed against people because of their sexual preference, gender, or disability.

As the Ranking Member of the Judiciary Committee, I look forward to working on hearings next month on this important initiative. Violent crime motivated by prejudice demands attention from all of us. It is not a new problem, but recent incidents of hate crimes have shocked the American conscience. The beating death of Matthew Shepard in Wyoming was one of those crimes; the dragging death of James Byrd in Texas was another. The recent murder of Billy Jack Gaither in Alabama appears to be yet another. These are sensational crimes, the ones that focus public attention. But there is a toll we are paying each year in other hate crimes that find less notoriety, but with no less suffering for the victims and their families.

It remains painfully clear that we as a nation still have serious work to do in protecting all Americans and ensuring equal rights for all our citizens. The answer to hate and bigotry must

ultimately be found in increased respect and tolerance. But strengthening our federal hate crimes legislation is a step in the right direction. Bigotry and hatred are corrosive elements in any society, but especially in a country as diverse and open as ours. We need to make clear that a bigoted attack on one or some of us diminishes each of us, and it diminishes our nation. As a nation, we must say loudly and clearly that we will defend ourselves against such violence.

All Americans have the right to live, travel and gather where they choose. In the past we have responded as a nation to deter and to punish violent denials of civil rights. We have enacted federal laws to protect the civil rights of all of our citizens for more than 100 years. This continues that great and honorable tradition.

Several of us come to this issue with backgrounds in local law enforcement. We support local law enforcement and work for initiatives that assist law enforcement. It is in that vein that I support the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which has received strong bipartisan support from state and local law enforcement organizations across the country.

When the Committee takes up the issue of hate crimes next month, one of the questions that must be addressed is whether the bill as drafted is sufficiently respectful of state and local law enforcement interests. I welcome such questions and believe that Congress should think carefully before federalizing prohibitions that already exist at the state level.

To my mind, there is nothing questionable about the notion that hate crimes warrant federal attention. As evidenced by the national outrage at the Byrd, Shepard, and Gaither murders, hate crimes have a broader and more injurious impact on our national society than ordinary street crimes. The 1991 murder in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, New York, of an Hasidic Jew, Yankel Rosenbaum, by a youth later tried federally for violation of the hate crime law, showed that hate crimes may lead to civil unrest and even riots. This heightens the federal interest in such cases, warranting enhanced federal penalties, particularly if the state declines the case or does not adequately investigate or prosecute it.

Beyond this, hate crimes may be committed by multiple offenders who belong to hate groups that operate across state lines. Criminal activity with substantial multi-state or international aspects raises federal interests and warrants federal enforcement attention.

Current law already provides some measure of protection against excessive federalization by requiring the Attorney General to certify all prosecutions under the hate crimes statute as being "in the public interest and necessary to secure substantial justice." We should be confident that this provision is sufficient to ensure restraint at

the federal level under the broader hate crimes legislation that we introduce today. I look forward to examining that issue and considering ways to guard against unwarranted federal intrusions under this legislation. In the end, we should work on a bipartisan basis to ensure that the Hate Crimes Prevention Act operates as intended, strengthening federal jurisdiction over hate crimes as a back-up, but not a substitute, for state and local law enforcement.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). Morning business is now closed.

NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE ACT OF 1999

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 257, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 257) to state the policy of the United States regarding the deployment of a missile defense system capable of defending the territory of the United States against limited ballistic missile attack.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Mr. COCHRAN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi is recognized.

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, the National Missile Defense Act of 1999 will make it the policy of the United States to deploy an effective missile defense system to defend against a limited ballistic missile attack as soon as technologically possible. Today, American citizens are completely vulnerable to ballistic missile attack.

Last year, when the Senate debated similar legislation, some suggested that our bill was premature, that there was not yet any reason to suspect that we were confronted with a ballistic missile threat. Now, however, there is no disagreement about the nature of the threat. Consider these recent developments:

(1) In 1997, the Director of Central Intelligence said, "Gaps and uncertainties preclude a good projection of when 'rest of the world' countries will deploy ICBMs."

(2) Last year, both Pakistan and Iran successfully tested new medium-range missiles, each based in some degree on a newly deployed North Korean missile, the No Dong.

(3) Also last year, in July, the bipartisan commission headed by the former Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, reported its unanimous conclusions that foreign assistance to missile programs was a pervasive fact and that new ICBM threats to the United States might appear with "little or no warning."

(4) A few weeks after the Rumsfeld report, North Korea launched the

Taepo Dong 1, successfully demonstrating a multiple-staging capability, and using a solid-fuel third stage. According to the National Intelligence Officer for Strategic and Nuclear Systems, instead of having the expected 2,000-kilometer range, the Taepo Dong 1 can attack targets up to 6,000 kilometers away, which puts Alaska and Hawaii within its range. The Taepo Dong 2 is expected to be able to reach the entire United States.

(5) The Secretary of Defense announced in January that the ballistic missile threat to the United States was no longer in question. He said, "We have crossed that threshold."

These recent events have answered the question about the threat. The question today is whether we intend to defend ourselves against that threat. The National Missile Defense Act is the appropriate answer to that question. It will send a clear message—to our adversaries, our allies, and our own citizens—that the United States will not leave itself vulnerable to weapons of mass destruction delivered by long-range ballistic missiles.

Some may suggest instead a continuation of our old policy of mutual assured destruction. That was the policy of deterrence we used to deal with the threat from the former Soviet Union. Former Defense Secretary William Perry warned us about using this policy with a new class of rogue states that may be "undeterrable" in the sense that we understand that concept.

The fact is, we do not need to be at the mercy of a policy of mutual assured death or destruction. Assistant Secretary of Defense Edward Warner said in January,

I believe that we are unlikely to turn back to the point where we will rely only on deterrence. I think over time we will rely on a combination of deterrence by threat of retaliation and this limited type of national missile defense. . . .

The passage of this bill by the Senate will also send an important message to those who are working to develop our missile defenses. The development program has suffered from the lack of a commitment to deploy the system. No other acquisition program has been handled by the Defense Department without an endpoint of deployment to aim for and reach.

The National Missile Defense Act will put an end to this uncertainty by telling the talented people building this system that it will be put in the field just as soon as they can get it ready. The NMD contractor's program manager testified in the Armed Services Committee last month that passage of this legislation would be a major motivation for those building the system, saying, "It would make them feel better about the mission they are being asked to carry out than any one thing I can think of [and that] people are much more motivated by knowing that the Government is truly behind this. . . ."

Finally, passage of this bill will tell America's citizens that its Government

is meeting its first and most important constitutional duty—providing for the common defense. One legacy of the cold war may be the absence of a defense against a massive and deliberate strategic attack from the former Soviet Union. But vulnerability to attack by everyone who desires to threaten America does not have to continue, and our Government would be irresponsible if it were to let it continue.

Madam President, there is no purpose in this bill other than to clearly establish, as a matter of policy, that the United States will deploy, as soon as technologically possible, an effective national missile defense system which is capable against limited threats. There are no ulterior motives, no hidden goals; there is only an intent to correct a defense policy that leaves us vulnerable to a serious and growing threat.

On the subject of missile defense, there are other things the Senate could legislate, such as system architecture, schedule, costs, or ABM Treaty issues. These issues will have to be dealt with in due course. But none of them has to be resolved in this bill, and we should not let this legislation become an effort to answer all of the questions related to missile defense.

The question this bill addresses is not a simplistic one, as suggested by an administration spokesman; it is more fundamental: Will we, or will we not, commit in a meaningful way to defending ourselves against limited ballistic missile attack? Will we tell the world the United States will not be subject to blackmail by ballistic missile? Will we tell our citizens they will not be hostages to the demands of those nations who seek to coerce the United States?

We have heard many statements made to reassure us about the willingness of the United States to defend itself, but there is always an "if" attached—"if" the threat appears, "if" we can afford it, "if" other nations give us their permission. With all of these "ifs," these qualifiers, we should hardly be surprised that the world doubts the United States is serious about defending itself from ballistic missile attack. And no one should be surprised that, in the face of this doubt, the threat continues to grow.

The National Missile Defense Act of 1999 will put an end to those doubts. It will tell the world that there is no question of "if," and as soon as it is able, the United States will deploy a system to defend itself against limited ballistic missile attack. I urge all Senators to support this bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 69

(Purpose: To clarify that the deployment funding is subject to the annual authorization and appropriation process)

Mr. COCHRAN. Madam President, to make it crystal clear that this legislation is a statement of policy and not an effort to circumvent legislative and appropriations committees of jurisdiction, I send an amendment to the desk and ask that it be stated.